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ICTJ Press Release on Statement by Former Truth Commissioners

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Desmond Tutu and others urge Kiplagat to step down as TJRC Chair.

NAIROBI/ NEW YORK, February 25, 2010—The head of Kenya’s Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission should heed the call that he immediately resign his post, as demanded today by 10 eminent past members of truth commissions from around the world, the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) said.

The ten former chairpersons and commissioners of truth commissions urged Bethuel Kiplagat to step down as chairperson of the TJRC on the basis of findings by two government bodies that he allegedly committed improper or illegal acts. They would create a conflict of interest with his role as TJRC chairperson and put commission’s work and reputation at risk.

The former chairpersons and commissioners include Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former chairperson of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission; Bishop Joseph Christian Humper, former chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Sierra Leone; and Salmon Lerner, former chairperson of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

“If the TJRC is to be effective, it has to be free of any taint of real or perceived bias and impropriety,” said Suliman Baldo, Director of ICTJ’s Africa Program. “To safeguard the commission’s work, we believe these international justice figures are exactly right in calling for the chairperson’s resignation.”

The full text of their call can be found [here](#).

About ICTJ

The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) works to redress and prevent the most severe violations of human rights by confronting legacies of mass abuse. ICTJ seeks holistic solutions to promote accountability and create just and peaceful societies. For more information visit www.ictj.org

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